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In Lorimer L-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1935 AV7 Burusho AV7

A woman "Bitan" dressed in red, dancing on the Polo ground at Baltit. The Band with pipes, big drums and kettledrums. Chenar and apricot trees.

End Plate 3

000 When the object is h or x the same notion is conveyed by the verb *waši.as*. Cp. in the above: *zai waṣimi* and *ayuaṣin*, and v.s.v. *waṣi.ás*. V. § 231. (Cs. **-ulṭaiyas*).

bi·ṭhàs y pl., double pl. *-miŋ*, hair (of animals), fur. — *tsirvo, hayuro, bepayo, yūr, biṭhàs* goat's, horse's, yak's hair, bear's fur. Cp. 104.24, 184.8 ff.

biṭhàskuṣ hairy. — *biṭhàskuṣ γalγu* a hairy caterpillar.

791 *biṭan*, pl. *biṭaiyo*, (*piṭaiyo*. 378,14), hm. and hf., soothsayer, wizard, sorcerer.

A person of either sex with certain supernatural powers, e.g. the ability to tell what is happening at a distance and to foretell the future. Nowadays they exercise these powers at public assemblies where they inhale the smoke of burning juniper twigs and dance till they reach a state of exaltation when their gifts become operative. Eventually they collapse from exhaustion. In earlier days they possessed the power to "bind" malignant supernatural beings. Cp. Texts No.s VI, VII, VIII, IX and XI.

000 To cause *biṭan*'s to play their rôle is expressed by several verbs:

biṭaiyo 'ogiraṭuman } they caused bi-
biṭaiyo ugurman } tans to dance.

242.1. Cp. 378.14. *S. G. ke H. M. biṭan ucudiar etsuman* they had brought S. G. and H. M. to make them act as bitans. 196.1.

(Possibly *biṭan* goes with the names, in apposition).

biṭan mucuraṭiṣa they set a female bitan to work. 316.11. Cp. 190.5 192.8, 200.16.

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000 loss of their independence,—I venture to point out the impolicy and injustice of interfering with these principalities.

I have already referred to a letter from the venerable chief of Nagyr, in which he strongly commends to my care one of his sons, Raja Habibulla, as a well-wisher of the English Government. Indeed, he has absolutely done nothing to justify any attack on the integrity of his country; and before we invade it other means to secure peace should be tried. I have no doubt that I, for one, could induce him to comply with everything in reason, if reason, and not
721 an excuse for taking his country, is desired. Nagyr has
567 never joined Hunza in kidnapping expeditions, as is alleged in the above-quoted paragraph. Indeed, slavery is an abomination to the pious and peaceful agriculturist of that
181 interesting country. The Nagyris are musical and were fond
[771] of dances, polo, ibex *battue*-hunting, archery and shooting from horseback, and other manly exercises; but the growing piety of the race has latterly proscribed music and dancing. The accompanying drawing of a Nagyri dance in the neighbouring Gilgit gives a good idea of similar performances at Nagyr.

787 The country is full of legendary lore, but less so than
791 Hunza, where Grimm's fairy tales appear to be translated into actual life. No war is undertaken except at the supposed command of an unseen fairy, whose drum is on such occasions sounded in the mountains. Ecstatic women, inhaling the smoke of a cedar-branch, announce the future, tell the past, and describe the state of things in neighbouring valleys. They are thus alike the prophets, the historians, and the journalists of the tribe. They probably now tell their indignant hearers how, under the pretext of shooting or of commerce, Europeans have visited their country, which they now threaten to destroy with strange and murderous weapons; but Hunza is "ayeshó," or "heavenborn," and the fairies, if not the inaccessible nature of the country, will continue to protect it.

000 The folly of invading Hunza and Nagyr is even greater

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of the sexes, and the management of the State, in theory, is 771
attributed to fairies. No war is undertaken unless the fairy 776
(whom, by the way, one is not allowed to see) gives the command by beating the sacred drum. The witches, who get into an ecstatic state, are the journalists, historians, and prophetesses of the tribe. They tell you what goes on in the surrounding
valleys. They represent, as it were, the local *Times*; they tell 787
you the past glories, such as they are, of raids and murders by 791
their tribe; and when the *Tham* or ruler, who is supposed to be heaven-born (there being some mystery about the origin of his dynasty), does wrong, the only one who will dare to tell him the truth is the Dayal, or the witch who prophesies the future, and takes the opportunity of telling the Rajah that, unless he behaves in a manner worthy of his origin, he will come to grief! This is not a common form of popular representation to be met with, say, in India. Grimm's fairy-tales sometimes seem to be translated into practice in Hunza-land, which offers material for discussion alike to those who search for the Huns and to those who search for the very different Honas.

Then with regard to religion, as I said before, though nominally 795
Muhammedan, they are really deniers of all the important precepts of true Muhammedanism, which is opposed to drunkenness, introduces a real brotherhood, and enjoins great cleanliness as absolutely necessary before the spiritual purification by prayer can take place. The people are mostly Mulâis, but inferior in piety (?) to those of Zébak, Shignán, Wakhan, and other places. Now, what is that sect? It is represented by His Highness Prince Aga Khan, of Bombay, a person who is not half aware of his importance in those regions, where, till very recently, men were murdered as soon as looked at. One who acknowledges him or has brought some of the water with which he has washed his feet, would always be able to pass through those regions perfectly unharmed! I found my disguise as a Bokhara Mullah in 1866 to be quite useless, as a protection at Gilgit, whence men were kidnapped to be exchanged for a good hunting dog, but in Hunza they used to fill prisoners with gunpowder, and blow them up for general amusement. His Highness, who is much given to horse-racing, confines his spiritual administration to the collection of taxes throughout Central Asia from his followers or

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storm of hail and wind arise. Mahmood having caused this to be done, the effects became visible; for, instantly the sky lowered, and thunder, lightning, wind, and hail succeeded, turning the day into night, and spreading horror and destruction around."

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Divination is still practised, in spite of the conversion of the country to Mahommedanism. The Dainyals, or diviners, who are of both sexes but are more frequently women, are supposed to receive the gift of second sight by the shadow of a Barai, or fairy, having fallen on them in sleep. Dr. Leitner speaks of the gift as being supposed to be hereditary, but this is not the case, though the daughters of Dainyals often become Dainyals also. Dainyals are said to be only found among the shepherd population, and it is easy to understand how a solitary life among the wild crags of the Hindoo Koosh should encourage a belief in the power of intercourse with the unseen world. Quite young people become Dainyals, and the spirit of prophecy is supposed to remain with them for life.

The first intimation of the gift to the friends of the recipient is conveyed by their finding him or her in a deep trance. The requisite music is brought, flageolets being substituted for the ordinary clarionets, and softly modulated airs are played close to the ear of the entranced. Gradually he moves and begins to show signs of life, on which a goat is brought and decapitated, and the bleeding neck presented to the Dainyal novice. This is the test of a true Dainyal. If the gift of divination has really come to him, he seizes the bleeding neck, and sucks the blood. Some find this too much for them, and refusing to suck the blood are looked on afterwards as only feebly gifted with the spirit of prophecy. The idea of imposture never seems to be entertained by these simple-minded people. The recognised Dainyals are consulted on all special occasions, such as the yearly festivals in summer, or the declaration of war with a neighbouring state. The spirit of divination is supposed to lie dormant in winter, and to be strong in proportion to the heat of the weather.

On the first occasion of my witnessing an incantation, two Dainyals were brought from a considerable distance to prophesy at the Ganoni festival in June. They were both women, one of about twenty-five and the other about forty years of age, who showed by their wild and haggard looks the strain of the often-practised ceremony on their faculties. A circle

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being formed round which the spectators seated themselves, a bunch of cedar twigs was placed on a flat stone and set on fire, and while two or three men vigoruusly blew up the flame, the Dainyal with a cloth over her head inhaled the thick pungent smoke which curled round her head, while the music played softly. In a few minutes she became violently agitated, her hands were convulsively clasped over her head, and her whole body was shaken with uncontrollable muscular motion, till, dashing the burning branches aside, she fell prostrate at the feet of the musicians, grasping the drum with her hands, and violently throwing her head backwards and forwards in a way that threatened dislocation. At length, overcome by the violence of her exertions, she fell apparently senseless on the ground. The spectators shouted long and loud at this triumphant manifestation of the fairy's presence, and the music played its loudest. Then the second Dainyal entered the circle, and in a few minutes was also lying motionless. The music now changed to a harsh cadence, and soon one, and then the other, rose and staggered round the circle in a rude attempt at stepping in time to the music. With their long hair floating loose, half-closed eyes, drunk with the fumes of the cedar smoke, and occasionally coming into collision, they formed a most weird and somewhat painful spectacle, while the shouts of the spectators rose and fell at each uncouth gesture, varied by shrill whistles that would have done credit to the gallery of a popular London theatre. The violent exertion soon produced fatigue, while the worst effects of the cedar smoke seemed to disappear and the prophesying began. While the music played softly, the two witches reduced their movements to a sort of aimless walk round the circle, with fixed and vacant gaze, occasionally one would stop and place her head close to the flutes or the drum as if listening to a language that others could not hear, and then again resume the weary round. Sometimes, during one of these pauses, one would, after listening, raise a shrill chaunt which was attentively listened to by the musicians, and after being repeated once or twice was caught up by them and loudly chaunted to the audience, while murmurs of surprise or congratulation ran round the circle.

This, varied with intervals of leaping and dancing which seemed to excite both themselves and the spectators to the highest pitch, lasted for about an hour, when the palpable exhaustion of the Dainyals made it necessary to close the meeting. A man going into the circle gave a back, as at

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D leapfrog, and one of the women, taking a flying leap on to
787 his shoulders, was carried out of the ring, the second Dainyal
791 following in like fashion on another back being offered,
B and the meeting broke up. No attempt is made to direct
787 the prophecy to any topic by hint or question, and the Dainyal
is always free to give, as the communication of the fairy,
791 whatever comes into her head. Considerable freedom of
speech is gained in this way, and an unpopular ruler often
D gets a broad hint given him. Dainyals only exist now in Gil-
[177] git, Hunza, and Nager, the stricter Mahommedanism of the
neighbouring valleys having disestablished them. Circum-
B stances point to this mode of divination being of Shin intro-
[177] duction, the majority of Dainyals being of that caste. Stronger
evidence is afforded by the fact that it is incumbent upon a
Dainyal, of whatever caste, to refrain from cow's milk, like
the most orthodox Shin.

During the ceremony the witches attempt, occasionally, to rush out of the circle, but are thrust back by the spectators, the idea being that they are forced to prophecy against their will. Occasionally, too, they affect to become excited by the sight of certain persons, bright colours, dogs, &c., and rush at and try to tear them, but are repelled by the spectators, and so are forced to content themselves with hurling stones at the object of aversion.

According to Elphinstone's account of the Siah Posh Kaffirs, something of the same kind exists among them. He says: "They have also persons who can procure an inspiration of some superior being, by holding their heads over the smoke of a sacrifice; but these are held in no particular reverence." Moorcroft mentions mountain witches at Nadaun who were called *Dain*, and a form of divination called *Dewalla* is still practised in some parts of the Punjab.

D Serious crimes, such as murder, are rare. In Wakhan
674 murder is punished by a fine of six horses, six guns, and
681 thirty woollen robes; should the murderer be unable to pay
the fine, he is forced to give up a son or daughter as a slave to the family of the murdered person. Theft is punished by a fourfold restoration of the stolen property, and the thief is bound to a tree and beaten. Grave disturbances, in which deadly weapons are used, are punished by heavy fines, and an offender is not pardoned till he succeeds in bringing a live hare to the Meer, which at certain seasons is a matter of difficulty.

D Though bloodshed is rare among the Dards as compared
674 with the Afghans, brutal murders are sometimes committed